The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE QUEST FOR HAPPINESS

THERE are many things in which people differ from one another, but there is one thing in which all people are alike, and that is, their quest for happiness.

There is not anything unworthy in this pursuit of happiness. If you turn to the Bible, you find it exalted there from first to last. The word "blessed," for example, which we meet all through the Bible, is nothing but the word "happy." We meet it in the Sermon on the Mount at the very threshold. We shall meet it again in that last day when the nations are gathered before Christ's judgment seat to be divided.

There are only two things that can make happiness unrealizable to us. One is division inside our hearts. The other source of unhappiness is evil in the heart, impurity or sin, the turning aside to the lower, the inferior and the transitory.

What are the conditions of the happy life? I do not believe that there is any happiness in the world, any real happiness, that does not find its root in a loving, simple trust in God as our Father and our Friend; One Who is so strong that no need of our life can ever be greater than His capacity to help; One Who understands so perfectly that He knows better than we do the inner struggles of our own hearts and everything that is going on in our own lives, so that we can be sure of perfect sympathy from Him; One Who combines that power and understanding with absolutely limitless love. How anybody can be unhappy who has this kind of a God I do not understand.

The second of these conditions is purpose—a clear and unselfish purpose. Maybe we never have formed any definite purpose. Our lives have been shaped for us by others. But sooner or later, if we are walking with Christ, we will find our way and resolve to go this way in the same definite manner in which Christ went His, and then happiness will begin for us, a happiness not contingent on anything without.

A third condition of the happy life is the element of surprise. Now, two things will give us a fresh surprise: the one is truth, the other love.

Nobody can follow the truth without being perpetually surprised, because we know only very little truth. What JOHN ROBINSON said is forever true: "Fresh light is perpetually to break from this Word."

What is true of truth is true also of love. You can tell thus the difference between true and false love. False love has no surprise in it: true love is full of surprises every day. It will be thinking of new ingenuities of expression, of new forms of utterance, of new kinds of self-sacrifice and service. Love is the most ingenious power in the world, and whoever once truly loves has entered into a life of happiness and a career perpetually fresh and new, full of unforeseeable surprises.

Let nobody persuade us that happiness is an unworthy end. False happiness is. Happiness sought where it cannot be found will be nothing but sheer disappointment. But the kind of happiness of which Christ was speaking, *Happy are the pure in heart, happy are the merciful, happy are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, happy is the servant whom I shall find watching*—that is what life is for, that we shall find that kind of happiness in it.—*Dr. Robert E. Speer.*

THE SET OF THE SAILS

ONE ship drives east, and another west
With the self-same winds that blow;
'Tis the set of the sails
And not the gales
Which decides the way to go.

Like the winds of the sea are the ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life;
'T is the will of the soul
That decides its goal,
And not the calm or the strife.

* * * * *

HEART'S GARDEN OF FLOWERS

Oft in my garden when evening is falling,
The sunset's long rays from out of the west
Throw halos of light on leaves and on flowers
And make their rare loveliness best.
When wandering there I am given to musing,
And sweet thoughts I cherish of friends true and fine;
Each fair blossom breathes of my best love unending
For you, ever dearest, Oh, Mother o' Mine.

The heliotrope whispers your "faith and devotion,"
With strength from on high to counsel aright;
The hyacinth white tells of "loveliness" always,
And reflects your sweet face with a glorious light.
The lily-of-valley breathes "unconscious sweetness";
While the verbena says that you oft "pra for me";
The dear yellow daisy speaks your "character's beauty,"
And pansies and violets your "thoughts' purity."

The lilies and daffodils, phlox and the larkspur,
All add their sweet message of comfort and cheer;
And whether the skies bring showers or sunshine,
They tell me that God's loving kindness is near.
When evening is falling or morning is dawning,
My garden, so sweet with the fragrance of flowers,
Is telling the story of God's love and goodness,
In giving to me such a friendship as ours.

I gather these blossoms so sweet and so fragrant
And add to them roses; the red, the white, too,
And Oh! that my arms could hold all of the flowers
I need to bear onward my message to you!
Your strength and your constancy, loyal devotion
In times when I'm wrong as well as when right,
Your faith and your spiritual great-hearted service,
All these make me love you with all of my might.

At morn on your birthday I send you these flowers
As plucked from my very heart's garden of love,
And the songs of the birds, the sweet birds in their bowers,
Are joining in sounding their praises above.
May ev'ry good thing in God's bountiful measure
Forever be yours till the end of all time,
There's nothing in Heaven or Earth I'm n wishing
For you, ever dearest, Oh, Mother o' Mine.
—*Florence B. Child.*

(Reprinted by request.)

THE SECRET NAME

There is a value in individual life which a m must win by himself alone. It is an authent character which is won only by conscious e deavor for things most worth-while and at so moral cost. It does not come to a man by t passing of the years. It comes by the way l spends his years. It is not received ready-ma from his fathers before him. It is not impresse upon him willy-nilly by society around hi Elements of character we have by inheritan and social influence are not to be despised; the are very important. But they are not all; the are not enough. There is a name we have b birth; there is also a name we are called by ci cumstances; but there is a secret name we wi for ourselves. A degree of inward freedom exercised in the winning of it. A thousan choices, small and great; a thousand little co flicts; a thousand promises made to oneself an kept; a thousand reconsiderations of the meanin of life; a thousand victories over one's superfici or popular self, when one "contends for the shad of a word, and a thing not seen with the eye with the half of a broken hope for a pillow a night, that somehow the right is the right"—a these go to the winning of the secret name. I is the Unknown Quality, which we come to be lieve in after we have lived a good deal, perha not until we have reached full maturity, and hav known varied experiences, and have kept ou courage toward life as a high calling, and hav flung our faith in the face of some ugly fact This secret name belongs to our genuine inde pendence. It is not the independence of eccen tricity. It does not weaken individuality a moral looseness will do. It does not harde individuality as self-seeking success or virtu will do. It draws the lines of fineness an strength and nobility. It can go hand in han with happiness or sorrow without being shackle by either. It can bear success or failure withou being spoiled by either. It loves fellowship bu is undismayed by solitude. It is something c the nature of God in Man. It is potential i every man. The past whispers it; the imperfec world issues a challenge to it; the future require it as the password. All events and experience come to the christening. As a mystic of th seventeenth century said: "There is surely piece of divinity in us, something that was befor the elements and owes not homage unto th sun."—*From a Sermon in the Church of the Firs Parish.*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

1926–1927

It is again the privilege of the secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to present her annual report. The eight regular meetings in Boston, from October to May inclusive, have been unusually enthusiastic and helpful. There has been an average attendance of forty-eight, and the average number of Branches represented has been thirty-six. Sixty-one Branches have been represented at least once. Members from Louisville, Ky., and from St. Louis, Mo., traveled the greatest distances to attend meetings. The Exchange again accepted the hospitality of Bulfinch Place Church, where its first seven meetings were held. A note of appreciation has been sent to Rev. Dr. Eliot, thanking him for the use of the Church. The regular May meeting, which was held in the beautiful Fifield Memorial Room of the new American Unitarian Association Building, was the largest of the year, with fifty-six present.

Your beloved chairman, Mrs. William B. Nichols, has presided at seven meetings. In her absence in February, when she was enjoying a rest at Poland Spring, Maine, Miss Edith L. Jones ably took her place. No secretary's report would be complete without a tribute to Mrs. Nichols, whose consecrated effort and unflagging zeal make her a leader in a thousand.

Your secretary has attended all meetings of the Exchange. She also has carried on her share of the necessary correspondence.

During the year three faithful Branch chairmen, Miss Carpenter of Malden, Miss Pierce of Lincoln, and Mrs. Lowell of the Chapel Helpers' Alliance, Providence, have been called home. Their names are held in grateful memory.

The annual report of Mrs. Sands, the efficient and indefatigable chairman of the Home Study Committee, shows satisfactory growth and increasingly systematic organization of that Department. The number of pupils enrolled is now eighty-eight; the eleven new ones added this year to the group have been selected from the list of applicants with care, it being the policy of Mrs. Sands to choose only those who she feels can be helped to help themselves. Fifty of these students are taking English courses in some form. Arithmetic, United States history, algebra, Latin, and geography are other popular subjects. To provide the necessary textbooks and supplementary reading for these pupils, 782 books have been sent. Branch chairmen have sent more books than ever before directly to pupils. It is to be hoped that in the near future *all* books for Home Study work may be sent in this way. This routine ought to be lifted from the shoulders of Mrs. Sands, who gives an unbelievable amount of time to the cause. The following excerpt from her annual report will give an idea of one side of her activities: "Thousands of cards, bed-time stories, and clippings have been used. Eight hundred copies of *The National Geographic* have been sent in. It will be a summer's work to prepare articles from these for next season's use." She will welcome still more copies of *The Geographic* and also of *The Mentor*.

She describes some of the new students as follows, "An ex-school teacher is studying that she may pass examinations to teach again. A young man with a good elementary education is taking a course in Commercial Law, provided by the Wellesley Hills Branch. Four boys living on remote farms are taking grammar school courses. One of these boys, whose home in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas is beyond the reach of a regular school, asked for help in the study he and his brother were attempting alone. His plaint, 'Seems as if 'rithmetic is hardest of all,' brought them a good teacher and books. A high school graduate in Virginia is being aided to teach her husband, who works in a mine. A young woman, who has already taken a prize for a magazine article, is studying English."

The donation of sixty new Spanish books by Providence, and the volunteering of a young man to teach this language, have made possible the offering of a new course. Requests often come for instruction in drawing. Since a teacher in the Springfield schools has offered to teach that subject, such requests can now be granted. "One of our faithful teachers of English, who has five pupils, is spending several months abroad. Think what it means to her young people to receive her letters and cards!"

An innovation this year has been the making and sending of four-page scrap books to women living on far-away farms, and yet desiring to keep abreast of the times. One such booklet contained "a sample of inexpensive dress material with illustration showing how it could be used to advantage, rule for making shredded wheat bread, a series of Angelo Patri's articles, and health and hygiene bulletins."

More teachers than ever before have volunteered to teach long-distance students. This encouraging feature shows that more and more people are awakening to the fact that in your Home Study Department lies an opportunity to offer service of lifelong value to many, whose lots have been cast in narrow places but who yearn for fuller and broader lives. Truly does Mrs. Sands speak when she says, "There surely is no work covering more ground or bringing both to donor and to recipient larger returns than the home study of the Cheerful Letter."

It is with a true feeling of admiration of work

accomplished that your secretary turns to another educational venture of the Exchange, the Library Department. Its chairman, Mrs. Stevens, in her annual report characterizes its endeavors as follows, "As a pebble cast into the water creates an ever-widening circle, so each good book you have sent has had its ever-widening influence in various communities."

North Carolina was the scene of the committee's pioneer endeavors. In every case but one, your libraries there are located in the mountainous, northwestern section of the state, far removed from your own school at Swansboro. As typical of results there, Mrs. Stevens says, "A graduating class in a North Carolina high school, which had received a Cheerful Letter Library, realizing how much they had been helped, are earning money to provide suitable books for a school library for their younger brothers and sisters. From another town comes the report of a twelve-year-old, who had been doing better than average school work. When asked by her teacher how 'she happened to know the meaning of more words than the others,' she replied, 'I have been reading books from the Cheerful Letter Library all winter.' When five districts united in a new school building at King's Creek, two Cheerful Letter Libraries also joined to form the nucleus of a permanent library in charge of a resident teacher. I told you last year of establishing a library in Piney Creek in a county with no railroad and very few miles of surfaced roads. There all of the muddy dirt roads lead to the library, whose custodian writes that many walk four miles to get books, knowing that the time limit is two weeks and at the end of a fortnight they must trudge back again. He further writes, 'If you could see their faces, when they are selecting books, often two or three to last them until they can make the trip again, you would see real appreciation for what you have done for us much plainer than I can make you see it.'"

More books have been sent to Utica Industrial Institute. Mrs. Stevens continues thus, "'Marching through Georgia' has been this year's most popular tune. Eight new libraries have been established there this year all with school superintendents."

The splendid coöperation of 52 Alliance Branches, representing 8 states, has made possible the starting of 36 new libraries. These make a total of 209 libraries in 27 states, besides in the Virgin Isles and the Philippines. The gratifying number of 8,223 books has been added to circulation this year.

The development of last year along education lines has continued. Fully two-thirds of the new libraries have been requested by county superintendents or principals of consolidated schools. In conjunction with Parent Teachers Associations your books have helped to provide local library centers. This is as it should be, for libraries so placed reach a maximum of homes.

The coöperation of the Massachusetts Bible Association and of Alliance Branches has made possible the filling of all requests for Bibles, most of which have been gratefully acknowledged.

In closing Mrs. Stevens says, "This annual chapter of my work would not be complete without an expression of my appreciation to the Cheerful Letter chairmen and friends, who have made this report possible. In any work of this kind there are bound to be discouragements, but they are soon forgotten and far outweighed when contrasted with the ever-widening circle of usefulness, influence and joy in the service daily expressed in letters from those in the field."

The chairmen of the Library and Home Study Departments both feel that they should have co-workers. If the scope of the two committees continues to grow at the present satisfying rate the routine work of each will be more than one individual can handle. It would be distinctly desirable for the Exchange to have several workers sufficiently familiar with these important departments to assume the leadership of them in case of the absence of either efficient chairman from illness or other cause. Surely some one will be willing to volunteer to help in each of these lines.

The work of Mrs. Austin, chairman of the Book and Magazine Club, is less spectacular but no less important than that of the preceding chairmen. The amount of correspondence received from applicants for reading matter is tremendous. Her task of securing recommendations for new would-be correspondents is arduous. To her falls the editing of the column of "Requests" in each magazine. The Exchange is most fortunate in being the recipient of her willing help.

Miss Edith L. Jones again is able to report that the contents of the sunshine bags have met the deficit for publishing your magazine, *The Cheerful Letter*. It ought to be possible to continue the paper in its present enlarged size for another year. Chairmen can help to bring this about in two ways: First, strive to enlarge the list of subscribers. Surely any Alliance member can afford to pay fifty cents for a year's subscription, which can be sent to some one on the list at headquarters who is anxious to receive it, if she personally has no time to read it. Why not make it a slogan, "A *Cheerful Letter* subscription for every Alliance woman!" Think what you could accomplish if that came true!

Secondly, don't forget or let your friends forget the sunshine bags. Always pass one at each Alliance meeting. When you are begging

for small change you need have no compunction in doing so frequently. Make a good quantity of the yellow bags and persuade many Alliance members to take them home to fill. If one is hung in a prominent place in your bedroom you will be surprised at how quickly you will fill it. Mrs. Brush of All Souls' Church, New York, continues to send in the greatest sum of money from the little bags.

In April your secretary sent requests for annual reports to all chairmen listed in the *Manual*. She received 121 answers, which contained such a wonderful record of achievement that she wishes she might have time and space to incorporate them all in this report. She is almost inclined to refrain from quoting figures, gathered from them; as she knows that in every case they are much smaller than the actual number of things sent. An increasing number of chairmen have referred largely but indefinitely to *many* packages of scraps, barrels of magazines, large boxes of books, rolls of papers, or multitudes of cards. Nevertheless, being of a mathematical turn of mind she is going to pass on to you some statistics.

All Souls' Church of New York still holds first place in the total number of articles sent, with First Congregational, Providence, R. I., in the second, and Newport, R. I., in the third place. Other Branches, whose reports numerically show large numbers of things distributed, are Brookline First, Newton Channing, Needham, Cambridge First, Roxbury, Wellesley Hills and Hingham, all of Massachusetts.

Thirty-six thousand fifty-four magazines have been sent. This is somewhat of a decrease over last year's number and is directly attributable to the increased postal rates. To offset this, many Branches are subscribing to magazines for their correspondents, who must appreciate current reading regularly received. After *The Cheerful Letter* and *The Christian Register*, the most popular magazines thus sent seem to be *The Country Gentleman, The Ladies' Home Journal*, and *The Youths' Companion*. The Wollaston chairman reports that her Branch is trying the experiment of sending subscriptions for different magazines to each of ten families in a neighborhood, who have agreed to pass them on from one to another.

One of your workers writes, "It seems as if every old lady in the South wants to make quilts." The 1,142 packages of scraps sent in their direction must have helped their ambitions. The Newton Centre chairman reports sending a box of miscellaneous scraps of yarn, which "became a pair of warm bed socks for an old mother, who suffered with cold feet. They must have been like Joseph's coat of many colors, but they kept her comfortable."

Perhaps the work of the Exchange that offers the most appeal is that done at Christmas time; 1,108 boxes of gifts were sent last December. Many chairmen reported that they had sent bundles to community or school trees, or to families of nine children. Your secretary feels that it is a conservative estimate that 7,000 people, the majority of them children, were remembered from Cheerful Letter Christmas boxes. It warms one's heart to imagine the happiness of a group of poor children in an isolated district, when they view a tree decked with gifts, attractively wrapped, with bright tags and seals. Frequently a bag of candy hangs on the tree for each child, too. The Quincy chairman reports sending a box of Christmas tree ornaments, which arrived in fine condition in Bridgeton, Mont., and were used on three trees. Many workers find Woolworth's a great help when it comes to purchasing gifts. The five or ten dollars, collected at many November Alliance meetings by "passing the hat," go a long way in a ten-cent store, and provide happiness out of all proportion to the amount spent. A box, containing more expensive gifts, was thus feelingly acknowledged, "The box looked beautiful; when it was opened the children rejoiced over their toys. Every day since, Roger (aged three), gets the notebook and marks on it, and says he is writing you and wants me to go mail it. I was very much pleased with the hairbrush, for I did not have one." At this season gifts of greens, nuts, and handiwork come northward, too. The Wellesley Hills chairman tells of a little girl, who sent a box of beautiful holly, the postage on which she paid by taking out nut meats and selling them. Such spontaneous expressions of gratitude are satisfying.

During the year many requests for information as to methods come to your secretary. She only wishes that each one of you might read the reports of your co-workers in other Branches. Increasingly more chairmen tell of regular meetings of committees, varying in size from three to eighteen. Then many hands make light work of pasting scrapbooks, reclaiming Christmas and holiday cards by the simple expedient of pasting them back to back or by more original methods, making and filling portfolios. The Stoneham chairman reports that one of the regular all-day meetings of the Alliance was devoted to Cheerful Letter work. Let's hope that next year many Alliances will help in that way. Of course many of these committee meetings are devoted to packing bundles and boxes. The chairman for the First Congregational, Providence, writes of a meeting in April at which were packed "boxes, containing a total of 3,062 articles. This day's output represented three months' labor on the part of the committee, aided by helpers at regular Alliance business meetings, where a table

has been ready with materials for the work. Your chairman wishes to endorse this phase as one calculated to familiarize members with the work going on and to give stray helpers a chance to lend a hand. Quite an amount has been accomplished at each such meeting."

The number of regular correspondents varies from two or three for smaller Branches to more than one hundred. In Roxbury twenty Alliance members have correspondents. Some chairmen prefer to send reading, etc., to different names, taken each time from the magazine. More, however, become intimates of a few. The chairman from the Samaritan Alliance, Brooklyn, writes, "You may notice that the names of two of my old correspondents are no longer on my list. That is simply because they have become such real personal friends that I do not feel like listing their letters." The Hingham chairman writes, "Word has come from the mother of two children that her little ones speak of me as 'the good lady.' I feel proud of the title, although it is entirely out of proportion to the little I have accomplished for them."

One chairman writes that it seems as if the amount of work done by a committee depends entirely upon the amount of money appropriated for them. That is mainly true. Yet some are very ingenious in the use of material, which others throw away. The worker who makes her Boston Symphony program the basis of a bedtime story scrapbook spends little for its construction, but she and her less economical sister worker are at the same disadvantage, when it comes to mailing their books. The sums of money appropriated for committees' uses vary from nothing to one hundred dollars. In general Branches are more generous than ever before in this respect. Many schemes are employed to raise additional funds. Some groups hold food sales at regular Alliance meetings, while others have pay luncheons at their own meetings. The Wollaston committee has made a tidy sum by obtaining subscriptions for a popular magazine.

Everyone agrees with the Indianapolis chairman, who writes, "My thrifty nature rebels at the high cost of postage, when I must pay more for stamps to mail a heavy magazine than it costs the public by subscription." The solution of this probelm seems impossible. When advertisements are removed to lighten the periodical, their loss is deplored by the readers. It is possible to cut out and bind a particular story or article as does the Beverly chairman, when she wishes to use it for educational purposes. The unfortunate fact remains that far-away readers cannot have so many magazines. Near-by hospitals, homes, and other institutions are the gainers. In Leominster members sold their magazines at home and used the money for subscriptions for correspondents.

Workers have been unusually beset by beggin letters, which tell of dire poverty and ask fo money and clothing. When your secretar receives such a request, as she frequently does she drops it into the waste basket and make sure that the name of the person, who so break the rule of the Exchange, which is plainl printed in every magazine, has no place on th list. If other members would do the same instead of allowing their sympathies to lea them into sending clothing, such appeals woul be less frequent. It is not that your correspond ent does not need all sorts of aid; it is that you organization is not an almsgiving one, and tha every time you break this rule you make i harder for the members who faithfully keep it Also, there are many people, just waiting for th kind of cheer which you may legitimatel send.

Again many chairmen complain of seemingl ungrateful correspondents, who fail to acknowl edge favors received. Do you realize hov hard it is for most of them to get a stamp an that it is a great task to compose a letter? I your letter or parcel did not contain a self addressed, stamped envelope or post card, blam yourself entirely. If it did, remember how lon it took that dear school friend of yours to ac knowledge her birthday gift, or when it was tha you last wrote to Aunt Mary.

Yet in spite of problems and discouragement what one of you will give up Cheerful Lette Work? Surely it will not be the Andover, N. H chairman, who writes, "We haven't done much but we have been happy doing what we could A group of 'Sunshiners,' organized in my own Sunday School, have done their bit to sprea cheer to sick and shut-ins. A boy of thirteen is vitally interested in corresponding regularly with a boy his own age in North Carolina." Nor will it be the Baltimore and Needham chair men, who both claim as a correspondent, Hilda Rose, whose experiences as a valiant pioneer appear in the *Atlantic Monthly* in a series o letters, written by herself and entitled, "The Stump Farm."

Nor yet will it be the Waltham chairman, who is helped by two Sunday School classes, "The Willing Workers," and "The Busy Bees." Her Branch with Wellesley Hills shares as a corre spondent a young man, serving a long term in prison in Virginia, whose outlook on life is slowly changing and who is determined to "go straigh and make good," when he is released. Surely the Norton chairman will continue, since she writes, "My efforts have been so wonderfully blessed that ways and means have come to me from most unexpected sources. I have many pen friends, who are a constant source of com fort and delight to my soul and I have decided that if I find one in ten, who is appreciative and

grateful, I am many times repaid for every moment of service." Lastly, the mother of your secretary will continue to take pleasure in her correspondent, who recently wrote, "I want to announce the arrival of our baby girl. She was born February 20, and weighed ten pounds when dressed. We named her 'Ruth Helen': the Ruth is for you. The boys think so much of you and so do my husband and I."

Respectfully submitted,
ETHEL LANE HERSEY, *Secretary.*

THE SCULPTOR BOY

CHISEL in hand stood a sculptor boy,
With his marbled block before him,
And his face lit up with a smile of joy
As an angel dream passed o'er him.
He carved it then on the yielding stone,
With many a sharp incision.
With heaven's own light the sculptor shone,
He had caught that angel vision.

Sculptors of life are we, as we stand
With our lives uncarved before us,
Waiting the hour when at God's command
Our life's dream passes o'er us.
If we carve it then on the yielding stone
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own,
Our lives that angel vision.

"GOOD HEALTH" NOTES NO. 5

THIS year the first day of May was widely observed as Child Health Day. In a health message, which was broadcast by Dr. Elizabeth N. Gardiner of the New York State Department of Health, she urges parents to take to the family physician any young child who has not had a thorough physical examination within the past year. She says: "Five thousand or more pre-school children are examined each year by the State traveling unit of physicians and nurses. In addition, an ever-increasing number of these apparently well children are examined by physicians appointed by county medical societies, and in some communities all children entering school for the first time have had a physical examination under the direction of the Parent-Teacher Association. Each year finds more children commencing the serious business of school life without the handicap of physical defects which can be remedied."

The beneficial effects of sunlight, and of exposure to the ultra-violet rays of the sun, are stressed by Dr. Edgar Mayer of Saranac Lake, in another of these State Department Health Talks over the radio. He says, in part:

"That all life has been and is dependent on the sun as it goes on through the ages emitting radiant energy has been known for a long time, but one of the most remarkable discoveries of the twentieth century is the fact that this light is very important in promoting physical development and more perfect nutrition in growing children, and in restoring health to diseased children and adults. This discovery was made chiefly through the study of rickets, a nutritional disease of children whose diet is not properly balanced. In this disease the bones grow but do not become hardened, and the results are weakness in muscles, discomfort and a tendency for the bones to become bent, resulting in bowlegs, knock-knees, sunken chests, etc.

"The importance of these rays is seen from certain experiments. Chickens kept from hatching-time indoors in an airy room but without direct illumination remained stunted and infantile in appearance, while a group of similar age kept under the same conditions and on the same food but allowed out of doors in the sunlight each day developed into perfectly normal birds.

"These ultra-violet rays of sunlight and of the sunlight lamp are of great importance to the nursing mother and to the infant which she is breast-feeding. In experiments on nursing cows kept indoors not only were the cows benefited by these rays, but they produced so much vitamin D that their milk cured chickens of rickets. This demonstrates that exposure of the mother to these rays greatly improves the quality of her milk, which will act as a preventive of rickets in her baby.

"Sunshine and outside air have proved their worth as important aids in the prevention and treatment of many forms of tuberculosis. Pure sunshine has given the best results, but in cloudy weather and in fall and winter, when the number of hours of sunshine are fewer, sunlight lamps have become excellent substitutes.

"Light at best is only an aid in the treatment of tuberculosis of all forms, but when properly used it is an important one. During the warmer months of the year children and even adults should be playing in the sunshine, wearing as little clothing as convention will allow. A thorough bronzing of the skin during the Summer would be a benefit to most of us, whether strong or delicate. Exposure should be gradual so as to acquire tan without excessive sunburn."

DIET HINTS

THE child that dines
On fudge alone
Will have bad lines
When he is grown.
—*The New York Times.*

HE that knows only how to enjoy and not endure is ill-fitted to go down the stream of life through such a world as this.—*Henry van Dyke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Austin, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

Only books of an instructive or wholesomely amusing character should be offered. Classics, educational works, and standard novels and magazines are always acceptable.

There is a large call for scraps of calico, gingham, and percale for patchwork.

REQUESTS

1. I am a widow, and have been for ten years. I have raised a big family, and lost half of them. I have two girls, aged 15 and 12, with two grand-children whose mother is dead,—a boy aged 13, and a girl of 5. Would be glad of some good reading matter, and quilt scraps would be highly appreciated. Mrs. Jane Miller, Whitetop, Va., R. 2, Box 67.

2. I am a young mother. I have a little boy eight months old; his name is Richard. My husband is away most all the time. I get awfully lonesome. We live about two miles from the public highway. Will you please send me books to read? I would also like quilt material, and anything to amuse the baby. Thanking you in advance, Mrs. J. A. Hanks, R. 2, Box 132, Grassy Creek, N. C.

3. Christian Clark of Vinton, Va., is a little girl eight years old, one of a family of five children. She would like books suitable for her age.

4. Mrs. Roy Payne, Stapleton, Nebr., c/o C. E. Rogers, asks for interesting fiction for herself, and her husband would enjoy "Ivanhoe" or any of Scotts' works. She also hopes to receive some of the Alcott books for her nine-year-old daughter.

5. I come to you for cheer. I am a poor married woman, and not able to do anything except light housework. I have been very weakly all my life, and surely would be very glad to receive any kind of cheer. Reading matter or quilt scraps would be appreciated. Mrs. Ella Wallace, Chilhowie, Va., R. 2.

6. I thank you for all you have sent me. My health is some better than it was when I wrote you before, but can't quit wheel chair entirely yet. I will appreciate anything for pastime, especially thread or cloth to work up into pretty quilts, handkerchiefs, etc. Sincerely, Anna B. Tyson, R. 1, Box 115, Wadesboro, N. C.

7. I wish to thank all the kind friends of the *Cheerful Letter* for the books, papers, cards, etc., sent me and my children the last year. Thank

you all so much, as I surely did appreciate everything sent me, and wrote in reply to every one when the address was on the package. We would still like to be remembered again this year, as we like to read. I always give the reading away to my few neighbors, so it does lots of good. I would like to get the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Farm Life*. I would like a large-sized English dictionary, and the book "White Flag"; also cards and books for the children: David, aged 5 years; Margaret, aged 2½ years, and Rita Merle, aged one year. We live on a Wyoming homestead, and get real lonesome and are glad to get the letters of cheer. I did so enjoy the *Cheerful Letter*, as it is all the church we have. I, too, would like to receive quilt scraps. Thanking you all so much, Mrs. Blanche Thompson, Oshoto, Wyo.

8. Mrs. Lilla Smith of Sandy Ridge, N. C., would appreciate any cheer in the way of reading matter.

9. Mrs. Maggie Spencer of Rugby, Va., is especially recommended by Rev. Frank Sturgill as one who would be very worthy and appreciative of reading matter.

10. I am sixteen years of age. I am in the seventh grade. I live about two miles from school and I have to walk through mud and all kinds of bad weather. I belong to the Baptist Church. My father is sick most all the time, and he is not able to work. I am not very strong myself. I have one brother living and two sisters. My brother and oldest sister are both married. So there are just two of us with my father and mother. I would like to receive books and embroidery thread of any color and kind, if that is not asking too much. Miss Esther Pennington, R. F. D. 1, Box 47, Rugby, Va.

11. It has been a long time since my name was in the *Cheerful Letter*. I wonder if all you good people have forgotten me? I want to thank all who have sent me reading in the past. Since I wrote last another little girl, now ten months old, has come to me, so I have to be at home to care for her, and I would be thankful for some magazines or books to read. Also some scraps for quilts would be greatly appreciated. Mrs. C. W. Foley, Bassetts, Va., Box 68.

12. Mrs. Morris Thomas of Polkton, N. C., R. 2, would appreciate quilt material and embroidery thread.

13. I am the mother of four children, ages from four months old up to eight years. My husband is a farmer. I would be glad to get some cards and papers for the children. I have been writing to a *Cheerful Letter* friend for over a year. I get the *Cheerful Letter* magazine. For reference write S. N. Burk, Athens, Tenn., R. 1. Mrs. J. O. Norwood, Athens, Tenn., R. 1.

14. I am the mother of ten children; nine of them are at home. I live two miles from a public highway. My husband works very hard every day. I would be glad to receive pieces for quilts, also books or magazines to read. Mrs. R. J. Blevins, Rugby, Va.

15. I want to thank you, one and all, for past favors. I have tried to answer every one, and if I have failed I thank you just the same. I have four girls and three boys, and live a long ways from school and church and I have a real hard time. I hope to be remembered in the future as I have in the past, so many kind thanks to one and all. Their kindness to me shall never be forgotten. I would be glad to get some reading for myself and the children. I would love to get some quilt scraps of any kind, or some old things I could make me some quilt linings out of. Many thanks. Hattie Brooks, Whitetop, Va., R. 2, Box 53.

16. I am writing again asking will some one please send me any kind of reading material? I live a long ways from church and would be glad for any religious reading. I would be glad of any cheer for my three children, ages: boys, 8 and 2; girl, 4. I and the children live alone most of the time. I would so much appreciate thread, quilt scraps, or embroidery cotton, or any kind of cheer. I send as reference Rev. J. M. Neoves, Crompler, N. C. May God's blessings rest on the *Cheerful Letter* and its work. Mrs. R. M. Phipps, Grassy Creek, N. C.

17. Mary Brown, Calhoun, Tenn., R. 1, is 12 years old. Her father is dead and her mother has to work very hard to make a living for the family. There are three children besides Mary. So she asks for some cheer for her mother, something with which to amuse the little sister, and juvenile reading and cards for herself and two little brothers.

18. I want the kind friends that have sent me reading to know that I appreciated their kindness to me. I would be glad of quilt scraps, or anything for my baby, a boy nine months old. His name is Henry Ford Barker. I get very lonely when my husband is away. Mrs. Walter Barker, Grassy Creek, R. F. D. 2, Box 69, N. C.

19. I would be very glad to have any of the following books for schools in Pennsylvania: eighth grade arithmetic, eighth grade English, seventh grade arithmetic, and fifth grade arithmetic; also Second Reader, and spelling book. I will be very thankful for any of these books, for I want to help the children get a start before school begins again, as I am not able to buy the books. If anyone can send them to me I will return the favor in any way I can. Thanking you for your kindness and wishing you Godspeed in your good work, I am, faithfully yours, Mrs. Walter R. Macy, Peach Bottom, Pa.

20. This is my first letter to the *Cheerful*

Letter. I am 14 years old. I have been to school only a few days this winter. I have not been very much in two years, on account of the sickness of my mother I have to help care for the little ones, as there are six younger than myself. My mother was in the hospital last summer, for an operation. I had to keep house and care for the smaller ones. Mother has improved, but is still unable to do the work.

I would like to do some fancy work. Will some of the readers please send me pieces of silk, bits of ribbon and embroidery thread? I would appreciate it very much. Lola B. Smith, Greensboro, N. C., R. 5, Box 211.

21. I am a girl 22 years old. I have three brothers at home. My mother is a poor widow and not very able to work. I have had an operation, and I am not very strong. I would love to correspond with the *Cheerful Letter* members, and would also appreciate quilt scraps or any reading matter that anyone would like to send. I get awfully lonesome. Mother and I are by ourselves in the day most all of the time. I would appreciate one of the *Cheerful Letter* books, if I am not asking too much of you. Mother and I are both members of the Methodist Church. Miss Vena Powers, Sturgills, N. C.

NOTICE: *No* attention will be paid to applications written in lead pencil, unsigned applications, or those without a reference.

FOUR WISHES

FOUR things I want to have and hold
When, counting time by years, I'm old;
When youthful looks and ways are gone,
And life for me is nearly done.

I want to have a youthful heart,
In which my years will have a part,
And hearing children at their play,
Within my soul be young as they.

I want to feel that some there be
Who still will care a bit for me,
Within whose heart a place I'll own
That will be mine and mine alone.

I hope that I may always keep
A sense of humour broad and deep.
Along with these a heart that sings
And sees the cheerful side of things.

If these four things I have and hold
I never will be really old;
Though I a hundred live to be,
Years will not count inside of me.

—*Selected.*

WITH OUR HOME-KEEPERS

FAVORITE RECEIPTS

Cherry Batter Pudding.—Take ½ cupful of potato flour, ½ tsp. of baking powder, ½ cupful of sugar and enough milk to make a thin batter. Pour the batter over one cupful of canned cherries (or ripe, fresh stewed cherries), put into a greased pudding dish and steam for two hours. Serve with a sweet sauce, using the fruit syrup thickened with cornstarch; beat in whipped cream.

Cherry Jam.—Old English cherry jam is a great favorite with many. Only the finest fruit should be used which should be weighed before stemming. For each pound of fruit allow a pound of granulated sugar. For every six pounds of fruit allow a pint of red currant juice and an extra pound of sugar. Remove the pits from the cherries and place in a preserving kettle, heating slowly. Simmer gently until tender, then add the sugar and currant juice with a few cherry kernels removed from the stones. Boil slowly for nearly half an hour or until the jam thickens. Stir well from time to time and skim off all scum as it rises.

Rich, ripe cherries made into old-fashioned preserves are always welcome. There are several methods that can be employed, but none better than the following, which is of old English origin: Choose ripe, but not soft, fruit and allow three-quarters of a pound of sugar to each pound of fruit. Remove the stems and pits, keeping the fruit as whole as possible. Make a syrup with the sugar—a gill of water for every two pounds. When clear, drop the cherries in and boil for 15 minutes, skimming frequently. Turn into an earthern dish and let stand over night; then drain the cherries through a sieve, putting the syrup back into the preserving kettle with the juice of white currants in proportion of one pint to a pound of fruit. Boil until the syrup is thick, skimming to keep clear. Pack full into jars and seal tight. Currants added to the cherries greatly improve their flavor.

HANDY HINTS

After having the house painted either inside or out, the windows often become spattered with paint; also the floors. This can be successfully removed by using steel wool of the finer grade for the windows, and coarser for the floors. After using the wool rub with turpentine or kerosene to remove any paint that should remain. Steel wool is fine to clean burnt food on glass and crockery baking dishes.

There is no better way of dusting carved furniture than with a brush. This will penetrate all the little crannies which could not be touched by an ordinary duster.

To restore aluminum which has become black, to its original beauty, apply vigorously with a flannel cloth, ashes moistened with kerosene.

A PAGE FOR THE CHILDREN

A PLUCKY BOY

A LITTLE boy came into a store and marched straight up to the counter.

"Well, my little man," said the proprietor, "what will you have today?"

"Oh, please, sir, may I do some work for you?"

The merchant looked down at David's appealing face and into his bright, blue eyes. He was unaccustomed to talking with boys and David was not yet seven years old, and was small for a boy of this age.

"So you want to do some work for me, do you?" asked the merchant, kindly. "I like boys that want to work, but what kind of work can you do, my little man? Why, you are not tall enough to see over the counter!"

"I am growing, please, sir; growing very fast. There! see me look over the counter;" and David stood on his tiptoes to appear taller.

The merchant tried to look over the counter at the boy's feet. He could not see the little toes. Then he walked around the counter to where the boy was.

"I will get nearer to you," said he, gravely, "that I may see how you look and how large you are;" and he looked at David a long time. There was a wistful look in his eyes.

"I am older than I look, sir," said the little fellow. "Folks say that I am a very small boy for my age."

"How old are you?" asked the merchant.

"I am almost seven, sir. My mother has nobody but me, and this morning I saw her crying because she could not find any money in her pocketbook. She had five cents that she was saving to buy food with. She thinks that the boy who took out the ashes stole it—and—and—I—have—not—had—any—breakfast, sir!"

The merchant looked kindly at the boy. "I can help you to a breakfast, my little man," said he, putting his hand into his pocket. "Here is a quarter: will that do?" The boy shook his head. "Mother would not allow me to beg, sir," was the reply.

"Where is your father?" asked the merchant.

"We never heard of him, sir, after he went to sea. He was lost when his ship was struck by an iceberg and sunk."

"Ah, that is bad! But you are a plucky fellow, if you are small. Let me see," and he looked down into the boy's eyes, which were looking straight into his.

"Let me see," said the merchant again, as his eyes filled with tears. "My little son would have been just your age. He, too, was a manly boy, and you make me think of him. Had he lived I would have given him the best education it is possible to secure."

"I have it! You may go to school in his stead; you may take his place in getting an education that will fit you for the duties and responsibilities of life. You are much too young to go to work. You ought to be in school until you are at least sixteen years of age. Indeed, eighteen would be a better age."

"But mother needs the money I could earn, sir," pleaded the boy. "I would like to go to school and learn to be something, but mother hasn't any money to buy food and clothes with."

"Well, my lad, I would not think of letting you take my own son's place in school without providing for you and your mother."

"Roberts," said the merchant to his bookkeeper, "take David's name and address and put him on the payroll for four dollars a week as long as he stays in school and studies his lessons."

"David, you are to bring me your report each week so that I may know how you are progressing and I will give you an extra quarter for each perfect report slip you receive. You are to get four dollars a week to help your mother feed and clothe you. Here's a dollar in advance; I'll take it off your first week's allowance."

If ever broken stairs trembled under the weight of a small boy, those in David Netter's humble home did so that morning on his return from the store.

"Oh, mother! I am to have four dollars a week as an allowance to help you keep me in school so that I can learn, and I will not have to work for it; only to study hard and get good reports. Here's a dollar with which to buy food, and promise me that you will never cry again. I am going to study hard and make something of myself, and when I am old enough I am going to make money and help poor little boys and girls to stay in school and get an education."—*Rev. Alan Pressley Wilson.*

A VACATION PRAYER

WE thank thee, God, for the liberty of the out-of-doors and the open sky. We praise thee for quiet empty spaces, for rain and sun and wind, for the voices of silence, for ecstasy and peace. Forgive us our neglect of the simple ways of happiness. Free us from the bondage to prison-houses we have made for ourselves.

Restore to us the lost use of our souls and senses, and something of the wildness of bird and beast if we have grown too tame. May no bird song fall upon our ears in vain! May no flower of the field bloom to dull eyes! May no wave of the sea break to unresponsive hearts.

Teach us to hear thee, see thee, find and adore thee, in all the wonder, beauty and law of thy universe. *Amen.*

HOW DOES IT SEEM TO YOU?

It seems to me I'd like to go
Where bells don't ring, nor whistles blow,
Nor clocks don't strike, nor gongs don't sound,
And I'd have stillness all around—

Not real still stillness, but just the trees'
Low whisperings, or the hum of bees,
Or brooks' faint babbling over stones,
In strangely, softly, tangled tones,

Or maybe a cricket or katydid,
Or the songs of birds in the hedges hid,
Or just some such sweet sounds as these
To fill a tired heart with ease.

If 'twern't for sight and sound and smell,
I'd like a city pretty well;
But when it comes to getting rest
I like the country lots the best.

Sometimes it seems to me I must
Just quit the city's din and dust
And get out where the sky is blue.
And, say, now, how does it seem to you?

—*Eugene Field.*

"SOME SMALL, SWEET WAY"

There's never a rose in all the world
But makes some green spray sweeter;
There's never a wind in all the sky,
But makes some bird wing fleeter;
There's never a star but brings to heaven
Some silver radiance tender;
And never a rosy cloud but helps
To crown the sunset splendor;
No robin but may thrill some heart,
His dawn light gladness voicing;
God gives us all some small, sweet way
To set the world rejoicing.

—*Selected.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper*, fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for books, magazines, cards, etc.*, also letters offering to give books and magazines, should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

4. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

5. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 26 John St., Brookline, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. One hundred and fifty-nine libraries are now on our lists.

6. The Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Hingham, Mass., should receive the more general correspondence from workers on the local committees, or from others interested in the organization and its methods.

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